

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 3-5, 8, 10-12, 14 and 16. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1.(Currently Amended) A fluid sample collection device for collecting 0.05 mL or less of blood, and for insertion and testing of said blood in an ultrasonic analyzer, comprising:

a thin elongate body having a finger-grip at one end, and another functional insertion end, said insertion end including,

a collecting region including an entrance aperture through which fluid enters a capillary tube within said collecting region ~~the device~~ by capillary action ~~and flows into~~ said collecting region,

a testing region in fluid communication with said collecting region for containing at least a portion of said fluid during testing inside said ultrasonic analyzer, said testing region further comprising an open-ended channel perpendicular to said capillary tube and passing through said thin elongate body from one external surface to another external surface ~~and adapted to be sealed off between sensor walls of said analyzer when inserted therein~~ for containing said portion of said fluid such that said portion is exposed to an external environment of said thin elongate body, and

a pumping region in fluid communication with said testing region for introducing a pressure-differential and thereby inducting said portion of said fluid from said collecting region into said open-ended channel of said testing region ~~for testing~~ wherein said portion is placed in direct contact at each open end of said channel with a sensing surface of said ultrasonic analyzer.

2.(Original) The fluid sample collection device according to claim 1, wherein said pumping region comprises a bulb for introducing said pressure-differential.

3. (Currently Amended) The fluid sample collection device according to claim 1, wherein said pumping region comprises an orifice for coupling a pump in said ultrasonic analyzer to said testing region for introducing said pressure-differential.

4. (Currently Amended) The fluid sample collection device according to claim 2, wherein said bulb is operated by insertion of said collection device into said ultrasonic analyzer and squeezing thereof during insertion.

5. (Currently Amended) The fluid sample collection device according to claim 2, wherein said bulb is operated by squeezing via an actuator in said ultrasonic analyzer.

6 - 7.(Canceled)

8.(Currently Amended) A disposable blood sample collection device for insertion and testing of a blood sample in a portable ultrasonic analyzer, comprising:

an elongate body including,

a collecting region including an entrance aperture through which said blood sample is drawn into the device by capillary action into a capillary tube within said collecting region,

a testing region in fluid communication with said collecting region for containing at least a portion of said blood sample for exposing said blood sample to a sensor during testing inside said analyzer, said testing region further comprising an open-ended channel perpendicular to said capillary tube passing through said elongate body from one external surface to another external surface and adapted to be sealed off between sensor walls of said portable ultrasonic analyzer when inserted therein such that said portion of said blood sample within said channel is directly exposed to a sensing surface of said ultrasonic analyzer external to said body, and

an orifice in fluid communication with said testing region for coupling a pump inside said ultrasonic analyzer to induct portion of said blood sample from said collecting region into the open ended channel of said testing region for testing.

9.(Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A disposable blood sample collection device for insertion and testing of a blood sample in a portable ultrasonic analyzer, comprising:

an elongate body including,

a collecting region including an entrance aperture through which a sample of blood is drawn ~~into the device~~ by capillary action into a capillary tube within said collection region,

a testing region in fluid communication with said collecting region for exposing at least a portion of said blood sample to a sensor during testing inside said ultrasonic analyzer, said testing region further comprising an open-ended channel perpendicular to said capillary tube and passing through said thin elongate body from one external surface thereof to another and adapted to be sealed off between sensor walls of said analyzer ~~when inserted therein, for containing said portion of said blood sample such that the portion of said blood sample within the channel is exposed to an external environment of said elongate body, and~~

a bulb in fluid communication with said testing region and manipulated by said analyzer to induct said portion of said blood sample from said collecting region into said open-ended channel of said testing region for testing wherein said blood is placed in direct contact at each open end of the channel with a sensing surface of said ultrasonic analyzer instrument.

11.(Currently Amended) The disposable blood sample collection device according to claim 10, wherein said bulb is manipulated by said ultrasonic analyzer as a result of insertion therein.

12.(Currently Amended) The disposable blood sample collection device according to claim 10, wherein said bulb is manipulated by an actuator inside said ultrasonic analyzer.

13.(Original) The disposable blood sample collection device according to claim 12, wherein said actuator comprises a solenoid.

14. (Currently Amended) A disposable blood sample collection device for insertion into an ultrasonic analyzer, comprising:

a thin elongate body adapted for insertion into said ultrasonic analyzer;
a capillary tube integrally-molded in said body and extending inwardly from a distal end;

an open-sided testing region in fluid communication with said capillary tube, said testing region comprising an open-ended channel passing through said thin elongate body perpendicular to said capillary tube from one external surface of said body to another for containing at least a portion of a blood sample such that said portion is exposed to an external environment of said body, said open-ended channel [and] adapted to be sealed off between sensor walls of said ultrasonic analyzer when inserted therein; and

an actuator region in fluid communication with said testing region for introducing a pressure-differential and thereby inducting said portion of said blood sample from said capillary tube into said open-ended channel of said testing region for testing wherein said portion is placed in direct contact with said sensing walls within said ultrasonic analyzer.

15.(Original) The disposable blood sample collection device according to claim 14, wherein said capillary tube is pre-loaded with anticoagulant.

16.(Currently Amended) The disposable blood sample collection device according to claim 14, wherein said thin elongate body comprises at least one edge which communicates with said ultrasonic analyzer to correctly position said disposable blood sample collection device with respect to said analyzer.

17.(Withdrawn) A blood analyzer system, comprising:
a blood analyzer having an insertion bay with a closure, and an ultrasonic sensor disposed inside said bay;
a sample collection device for insertion into the bay of said analyzer, said sample collection device further comprising,
a body adapted for insertion into said analyzer;
a capillary tube integrally-molded in said body and extending inwardly from a distal end for collecting a blood sample,
an open-sided testing chamber in fluid communication with said capillary tube,
and

an actuator region in fluid communication with said testing chamber for introducing a pressure-differential and thereby inducting blood from said capillary tube into said testing chamber for testing.

18.(Withdrawn) The blood analyzer system of claim 17, wherein said closure latches shut against said sample collection device to secure it in the bay.

19.(Withdrawn) The blood analyzer system of claim 17, wherein said sample collection device is formed with structural features for indexed seating inside the bay.

20.(Withdrawn) The blood analyzer system of claim 17, wherein said sample collection device is formed of an elastomer.

21.(Withdrawn) The blood analyzer system of claim 20, wherein said elastomer sample collection device is formed with a crescent aperture for resiliency when latched into said bay.